TALES FROM THE TOMB

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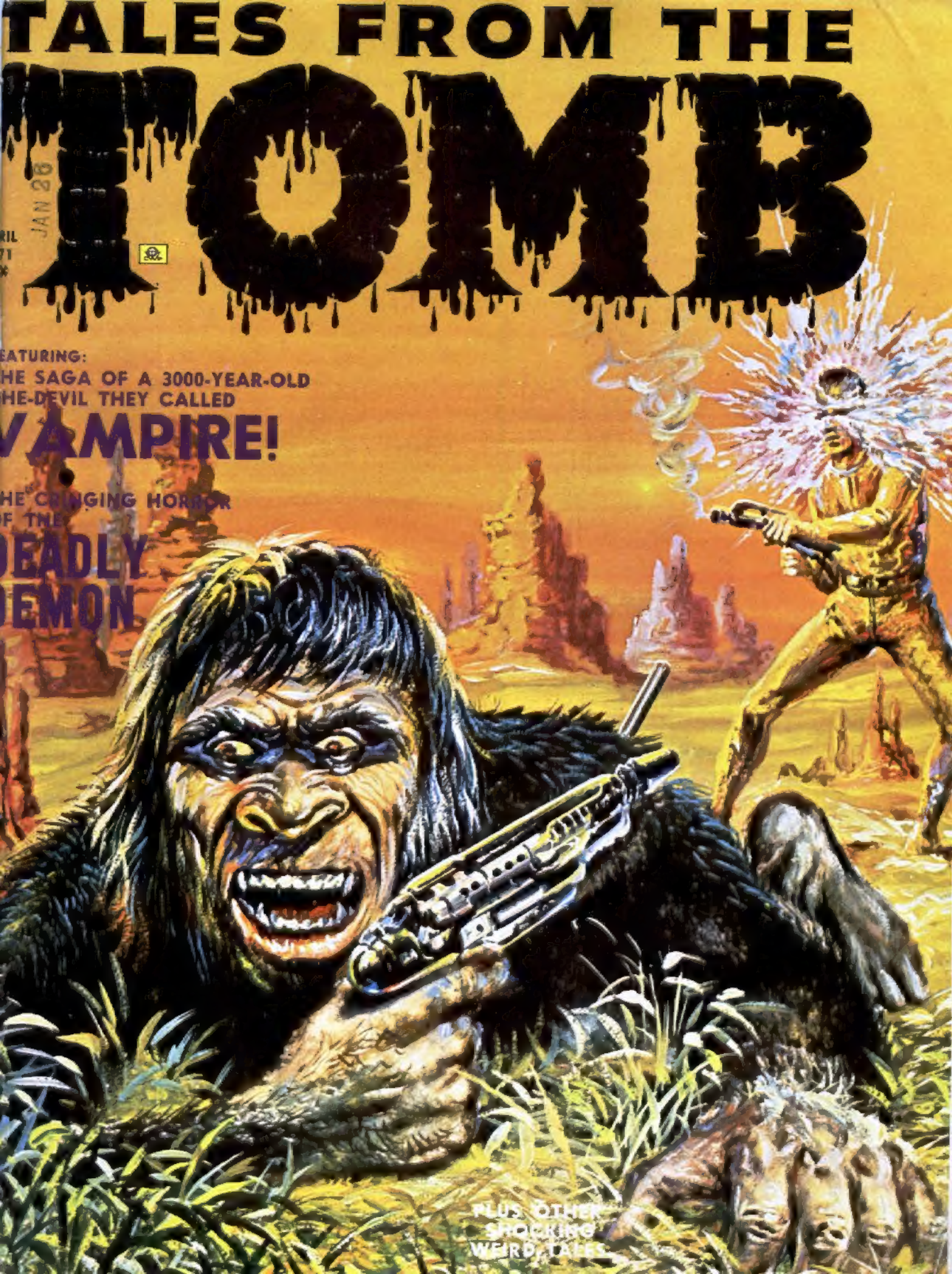
EATURING:
HE SAGA OF A 3000-YEAR-OLD
HE-DEVIL THEY CALLED
VAMPIRE!

HE CRINGING HORROR
F THE
DEADLY DEMON



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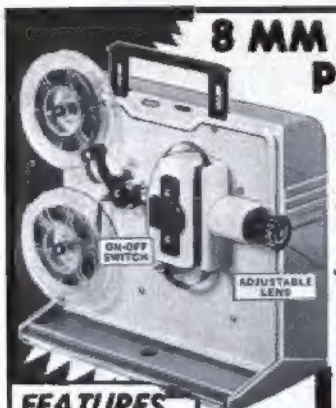

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CARL BURGOS, Editor IRVING FASS, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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VAMPIRE

WHERE IS YOUR SCIENCE NOW, DOCTOR? HOW CAN SCIENCE STOP MY APPARITIONS OF EVIL FROM DESTROYING YOU? HA! HA!

A MEDICAL SOCIETY SENDS A NOTED DOCTOR ON A STRANGE MISSION TO INTERVIEW A WITCH-DOCTOR WHO IS TRYING TO DESTROY A 3000 YEAR OLD VAMPIRE! ODD? UNUSUAL? ... READ ON, IT'S A SHOCKER!

A WEEK LATER, AS THE CADRILLO SAFARI ENTERED THE KAVALI DISTRICT...
HOW MANY DEATHS HAVE GONE INTO THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF MY LIFE? HOW MANY RIVERS OF BLOOD WERE SPILLED TO FILL MY VEINS?
MY VEINS? HA! THE THOUSAND SHAPES I HAVE TAKEN WHENEVER MY THIRST FOR BLOOD OVERWHELMED ME!
YET STILL THEY COME TO CHALLENGE MY POWER... THESE STRANGERS, WHO THINK I CAN BE DEFEATED BY MORTAL MEANS!
THAT NIGHT...
DAD, THE BEARERS KEEP STARING AT THE JUNGLE AND MUMBLING! WHAT IS IT?
FEAR, MY DEAR! FEAR! THERE'S A LEOPARD OUT THERE! BEEN GROWLING SINCE SUNDOWN... MORE LIKE A HUMAN GROWL!
A HUMAN GROWL? THAT'S RIDICULOUS!
I AGREE, ELLEN, BUT THE NATIVES SAY IT'S THE WOMAN WHO'S LIVED THREE THOUSAND YEARS!
YOU'RE A NEWSPAPERMAN, ERNEST! DO YOU BELIEVE IN THIS EVIL WOMAN WHO LIVES FOREVER?
OF COURSE NOT, ELLEN! THAT'S WHY I'M HERE! TO MAKE A BUCK, WRITING ABOUT IT...

...AND TO GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER! I LIKE YOU, ELLEN!
KEEP YOUR MIND ON THE EGYPTIAN PRINCESS WHO'S LIVED THREE THOUSAND YEARS!

YOU'RE THE MOST EXCITING WOMAN I'VE EVER MET!
(GASP)! ERNEST! TH-THERE'S AN ANIMAL NEAR US!

IT'S THAT LEOPARD! IT WAS IN THE BRUSH NOT A DOZEN FEET FROM US!
TH-THEN IT OVER-HEARD EVERY WORD YOU SAID TO ME!

OVERHEARD? YOU SOUND LIKE THESE SUPERSTITIOUS NATIVES!
EASY, ELLEN! WOMEN MAY BE CATS, NOT THREE THOUSAND YEAR OLD LEOPARDS...

THAT NIGHT, AS THE FIRES OF THE CAMP BURNED LOW...
EEIIII!

ERNEST! GET UP! A LEOPARD KILLED ONE OF THE BEARERS! I FIRED AT THE BEAST! B-BUT THE BULLET WENT THROUGH IT!
YOU'RE CRAZY, CADRILLO! YOU'RE GETTING JITTERY! I'LL DO THE SHOOTING!

SEE? IT HAPPENED TO YOU, TOO! THAT BEAST MUST BE IMMUNE TO BULLETS, BECAUSE... (GASPS!)... IT ISN'T A LEOPARD!
LOOK!

IT-IT'S A WOMAN!
GAPE, FOOLS! GAPE! DOCTOR! YOU CLAIM I CANNOT EXIST... YET YOU ARE AFRAID OF ME!
YES, A WOMAN! YOU WILL SEE ME AGAIN! I'LL BE BACK! AND WHEN I DO... BEWARE!
SHE'S GONE!
THEN YOU SAW IT, TOO! I DIDN'T SEE IT ALONE!
THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T HAPPEN!
ALL WE SAW IS IMAGINATION! OUR IMAGINATION... PLAYING TRICKS ON US!
TRICKS, ERNEST? IMAGINATION? THE BEARER LIES DEAD... HIS BLOOD SUCKED FROM HIS BODY!
IT WAS A SLIGHTLY CHANGED GROUP WHO REACHED THE VILLAGE OF GORO, THE WITCH DOCTOR, TWO DAYS LATER...
THE RUMOR'S SPREAD THAT YOU CURE ALL DISEASES... WHAT'S YOUR SECRET, GORO?
GORO ASK GOOD SPIRIT INSIDE GORO TO FIGHT EVIL SPIRIT IN SOMEBODY ELSE!
GORO HEAR EVIL WOMAN TAKE LEOPARD SHAPE! KILL BEARER! AGAIN GORO MAKE GOOD MEDICINE TO FIGHT EVIL MEDICINE!
HEAR THAT, CADRILLO? THERE'S GOOD MEDICINE AND BAD!
EEE-BA! MAN-A-KO TEE! EEE-BA!
REMEMBER THOSE WORDS, DOC!
SHUT UP YOU FOOL! WE HAVEN'T GOT AN ANSWER FOR WHAT WE SAW OUT THERE... MAYBE HE HAS!

DOC! WE SAW NOTHING IN THE JUNGLE! IT WAS A DREAM... LIKE THIS BUNK ABOUT GORO PERFORMING MEDICAL MIRACLES!
ERNEST'S RIGHT, DAD! YOU'RE IGNORING SCIENCE!

BUT THIS ISN'T NEW YORK, ELLEN! MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING TO THIS MUMBO JUMBO!
COME TO YOUR SENSES, CADRILLO! GORO'S KNOCKING HIMSELF OUT OVER SUPERSTITIOUS IDIOCY!

HOURS LATER... AS THE GROANING MEDICINE MAN FELL TO HIS KNEES...
GOOD POWER NO COME! EVIL POWER TOO GREAT!...(GASP!) EVIL POWER COME CLOSER! EVIL POWER TRY TO KILL GORO... (GASP!)...NO! NO!
I'VE HAD MY FILL OF THIS NONSENSE! I'M TURNING IN!

ERNEST! SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS GOING ON! DANGER IS ALL AROUND US!
YOU CALL YOURSELF A DOCTOR? A MAN OF SCIENCE?

D-DAD! LOOK!
EVIL SPIRITS!... (GASP!)...THEY KILL GORO! THEY KILL EVERYBODY!
N-NO! (GASP!)...MY EYES ARE PLAYING TRICKS ON ME!

THAT'S IT, MR. GRAHAM! GO ON PRETENDING THE SUPERNATURAL CAN'T HAPPEN WHILE IT DOES HAPPEN...!
IT'S THE LEOPARD WOMAN!
SHE'S ORDERING HER CREATURES TO KILL GORO!

I FIRED AT THE FIENDS...YET THE BULLETS STRIKE NOTHING! GREAT HEAVENS! WHAT IS HAPPENING TO US?

ERNEST! NOW THEY'RE AFTER US!
QUITE RIGHT, DOCTOR! MY LITTLE PETS WILL SLAY YOU AS EASILY AS THEY DESTROYED GORO, UNLESS MR. GRAHAM JOINS ME!

CAN YOU BE THE CONSORT OF A THREE THOUSAND YEAR OLD WOMAN, MR. GRAHAM!
ALL RIGHT! YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR WAY!
NO! NO! ERNEST!

YOU THOUGHT THE SUPERNATURAL, THE UNEARTHLY WAS THE OBSESSION OF IDIOTS AND SAVAGES! YOU PUT YOUR TRUST IN REASON, IN SCIENCE! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF SCIENCE NOW?
SCIENCE IS USELESS! WE'RE HELPLESS AGAINST EVIL WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND!

UNDERSTANDING? HA! GORO UNDERSTOOD! GORO TRIED TO DESTROY ME... SEE HOW GORO SUCEEDED? HA! HA!
YOU'RE HORRIBLE BEYOND BELIEF! I MUST SAY THIS NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO TO ME!

I'LL GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION OF HOW HORRIBLE I CAN BE! HERE'S A GLIMPSE OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOU!... GO, MY DEVILS! WIPE OUT EVERY CREATURE IN THIS VILLAGE! GO! SLAY! SLAY!
NO! YOU GAVE ME YOUR WORD!

MY WORD? HA! HA! WHAT IS A PROMISE TO ME? DOES EVIL CARE FOR HONOR, TRUTH, KINDNESS? EVIL DOES WHAT IT PLEASES!
YOU CAN'T TALK TO HER, ERNEST! SHE HAS NO MIND, NO SOUL, NO HEART! GORO! ONLY GORO CAN SAVE US!

ERNEST! ONLY GORO'S GOOD MEDICINE CAN HELP US! EEE-BA! MAN-A-KO-TEE! EEE-BA!
STOP IT OR MY MINIONS WILL SLAY YOU FIRST!
FIRST... SECOND... WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WE'RE DOOMED ANYWAY!

ALL RIGHT, YOU'LL DIE!... SLAY THEM MY MINIONS!
PRAY, ERNEST! PRAY!
I'M TRYING TO REMEMBER WHAT GORO SAID! WAIT! I-I REMEMBER!

HATA-MAKO-BA! EEE-BA! GORO! YOU MUST HELP US!
LOOK! SOMETHING'S RISING FROM GORO'S CORPSE!
A GHOST! GORO'S GHOST!

YES! I AM THE GHOST OF GORO! ALIVE, I WAS POWERLESS AGAINST THE SHE DEVIL'S EVIL! DEAD... I AM ALL POWERFUL! YOU BROUGHT ME INTO EXISTENCE!
EVIL SPIRITS! SLAY GORO! SLAY HIS GHOST!

NO, EVIL ONE! THIS REVENGE HAS BEEN LONG IN COMING! BUT AT LAST, AFTER THREE THOUSAND YEARS! REVENGE!

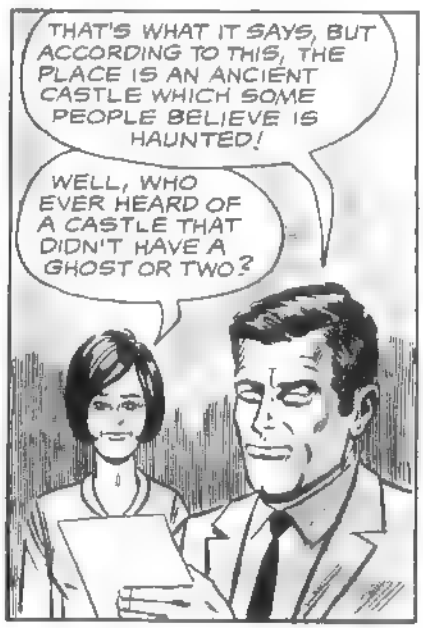
G-GORO! ...NO! D-DON'T KILL ME!
THERE ARE POWERS OF EVIL AND DARKNESS, BUT THERE ARE ALSO INVISIBLE POWERS OF GOOD! TONIGHT THE GOOD SHALL WIN!

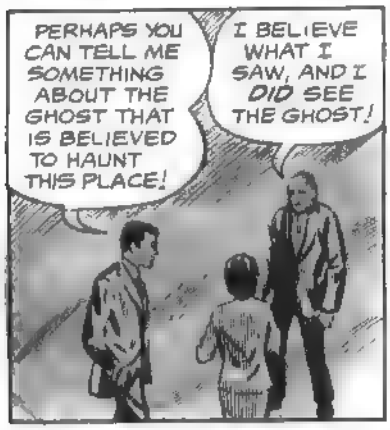
EEEAAAA!
MY WORK IS DONE! THE EVIL SPIRITS FLEE IN TERROR! -- NOW I, TOO CAN RETURN TO THE DEAD... IN PEACE!

ALL HAD PASSED LIKE A DREAM! YET ONE SHRED OF REALITY REMAINED... THE DEAD WITCH DOCTOR!
IT DID HAPPEN, DAD, DIDN'T IT?
REALITY IS SOMETIMES A DREAM!
TONIGHT WE DISCOVERED A NEW WORLD-- WE HAVE MUCH TO LEARN! MUCH!
The End

THE DEADLY DEMON

HIS HEART TREMBLED AS HE BEHOLD THE TERRIBLE APPARITION H S BLOOD RAN COLD WITH DREAD AS ITS CLAMMY HANDS SEIZED HIM IN A GRIP OF DEATH! HE KNEW ONE WEAPON COULD SAVE HIM, BUT COULD IT BE USED IN TIME?





"KIVAN PLOTTED THE DEATH OF THE WOMAN'S HUSBAND, AND ONE NIGHT, WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF, HE KILLED THE MAN!

"THE TOWNSPEOPLE HEARD OF THE TERRIBLE DEED, AND THEY CONVERGED UPON THE CASTLE TO EXACT PUNISHMENT UPON HIM!"
THEY SEEK TO TAKE MY LIFE! I MUST HIDE!

"BUT THE ENRAGED CITIZENS FIRED THE TOWER--"
DESTROY THE EVIL OWE!
DEATH TO THE MUDEROUS SWINE!

"THE WICKED TYRANT WAS TRAPPED IN A PRISON OF HIS OWN MAKING! HE PERISHED IN THE FLAMES!"

EEEEK!
"THE CENTURIES ROLLED BY, BUT THE SPIRIT OF KIVAN THE TERRIBLE COULD FIND NO REST! DOWN THROUGH THE AGES, HIS GHOST HAS HAUNTED THE CASTLE!"

AS THE OLD MAN CONCLUDED HIS NARRATIVE I LOOK AT HIM AND SAID.
THAT'S A VERY CHILLING STORY, CLEM, BUT IT'S TOO FANCIFUL TO BE TRUE!
BUT IT'S ALL TRUE! I SAW THE GHOST SEVERAL TIMES!

DAWN AND I TOOK UP RESIDENCE IN THE ANCIENT EDIFICE!
I CAN CARRY ON MY WORK FROM HERE FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS! THEN MAYBE I'LL SELL IT WHEN MY TITLE IS CLEAR!

WE PROCEEDED TO EXAMINE THE CASTLE AND...
GOOD HEAVENS
AIEECH!

OH, IT'S HORRIBLE, JIM! SOMEONE MUST HAVE KILLED HIM AND HID THE BODY HERE!
NO! NOTICE HIS EYES, HOW THEY BULGE! I THINK THIS MAN WAS FRIGHTENED TO DEATH!

I CALLED THE POLICE, AND WHEN THEY ARRIVED SEVERAL HOURS LATER, THEY EXAMINED THE BODY, AND CAME TO THE SAME CONCLUSION I HAD, CAUSE OF DEATH: HEART FAILURE INDUCED BY SHOCK! THE INCIDENT WAS CLOSED!

AFTER WE RETIRED, AND WE WERE AWAKENED BY A HORRIBLE MOANING SOUND...
WHAT WAS THAT?
JIM! JIM! I'M FRIGHTENED!

IT'S COMING FROM THE CORRIDOR! THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE!
I'LL GO OUT AND SEE WHAT IT IS!

I OPENED THE DOOR AND...
I SMELL IT TOO, JIM, DO YOU SUPPOSE...?
THERE SEEMS TO BE THE ODOR OF SMOKE IN THE AIR! YES IT SMELLS LIKE BURNING RAGS!

I DIDN'T ANSWER DAWN'S COMPLETE QUESTION;... THE NEXT NIGHT, THE FRIGHTFUL INCIDENT WAS REPEATED!
LISTEN, JIM, THAT MOANING SOUND, IT'S BACK AGAIN!

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, THE HORRIBLE MOANING SMOTE UPON OUR EARS, AND EACH TIME I ENTERED THE CORRIDOR IT WAS EMPTY!
JIM, JIM, YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!
IT'S NO USE, DAWN! THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE!

EVERY NIGHT WE WERE AWAKENED BY THE TERRIBLE SCREAMS AND MOANS! BUT THE CLIMAX CAME WHEN WE HEARD THE CLANKING AND SCRAPING OF CHAINS MOVING THROUGH THE HALL...
DON'T GIVE IN TO IT, DAWN, SOMEONE MUST BE TRYING TO FRIGHTEN US AWAY SO THEY CAN TAKE POSSESSION OF THE ESTATE!

DAWN DRIVEN TO THE VERGE OF DESPERATION SLIPPED QUIETLY FROM THE BEDROOM...
I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS! I CAN'T STAND THIS TERRIBLE SUSPENSE!

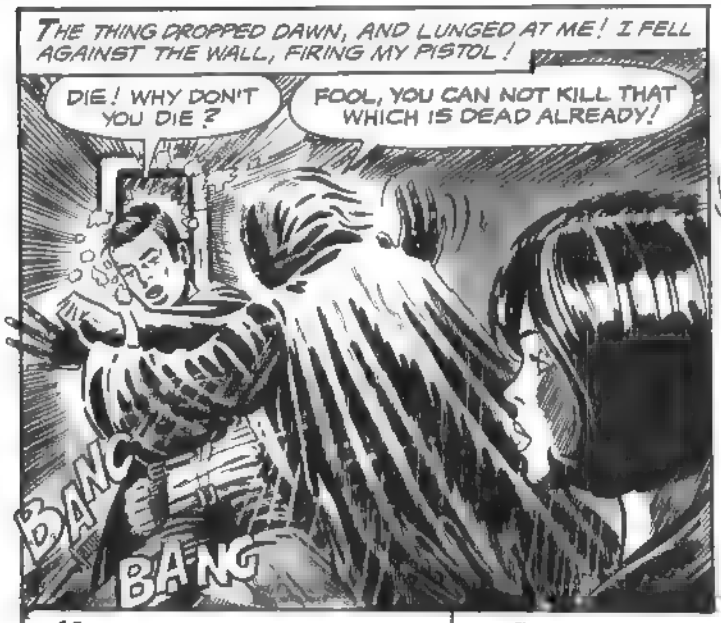
SHE TOOK UP A POSITION BEHIND AN ANCIENT SUIT OF ARMOR AND WAITED...
HE'S COMING! I CAN HEAR THE CLANK OF CHAINS IN THE DISTANCE! WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S GETTING CLOSER! IT'LL BE HERE IN ANOTHER MOMENT!

THE NIGHT WAS SUDDENLY RENT BY A FRIGHTFUL SCREAM ..
AIEECH!
DAWN, DAWN!
CRASH

I'M COMING, DAWN!
I SPRANG INTO THE CORRIDOR, I KNEW DAWN MUST BE IN THE CLUTCHES OF SOME NAMELESS HORROR! THE HALL WAS DESERTED, BUT AGAIN I HEARD HER SCREAM ..
AIEECH!

I BURST INTO THE TOWER, AND I BEHELD THERE A SIGHT WHICH SENT STARK TERROR COURSING THROUGH MY FRAME! THE FRIGHTENED GIRL WAS STRUGGLING IN THE EMBRACE OF A SPECTER...
YOU CHOSE TO IGNORE THE WARNING GIVEN YOU, MORTAL AND THUS YOU PAY FOR YOUR FOLLY WITH YOUR LIFE, AND THE LIFE OF THIS MAID!

I FOLLOWED HER CRIES! THE NOXIOUS ODOR OF SMOLDERING CLOTH WAFTED TO MY NOSTRILS!
JIM, JIM!


THE THING DROPPED DAWN, AND LUNGED AT ME! I FELL AGAINST THE WALL, FIRING MY PISTOL!
DIE! WHY DON'T YOU DIE?
FOOL, YOU CAN NOT KILL THAT WHICH IS DEAD ALREADY!
BANG
BANG

I CAN'T BREATHE
AND THUS YOU DIE, MORTAL!

MY HAND SUDDENLY CLOSED UPON THE HILT OF A DAGGER, AND I SLASHED AND HACKED AT THE THING WITH IT!
NO! NO! IT IS THE BLADE I USED TO MURDER REBECCA'S HUSBAND! IT HAS BECOME A WEAPON OF JUSTICE!

AS I TRANSFIXED THE ECTOPLASMIC HEART OF THING, IT SUDDENLY SCREAMED HORRIBLY, AND VANISHED IN A SHEET OF FLAME!
NO, NO! THE ETERNAL FLAMES ARE ENVELOPING ME! MY DOOM IS SEALED! AAAGH!

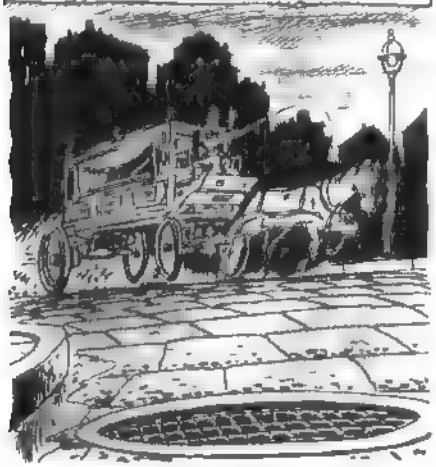
AND THEN, THE TOWER EXPLODED!
BOOM

THE SUN WAS SHINING WHEN WE CAME TO! WE WERE LYING AT THE FOOT OF THE TOWER AMID SCATTERED DEBRIS!
IT-IT COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED WE MUST HAVE IMAGINED THE WHOLE THING!
NO, IT DID HAPPEN! IT WASN'T IMAGINATION!

JIM, THE KNIFE YOU USED ON THE GHOST! LOOK IT'S SMOLDERING!
YES, AND IT'S EMITTING THE SAME ODOR OF BURNT RAGS THAT SURROUNDED THE GHOST... AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, I NO LONGER DOUBT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SUPERNATURAL!
The End

THE SEWER WEREWOLVES

NIGHT COMES TO PARIS AS A HEARSE TRUNDLES ITS CASKET BEARING A DEAD MAN TO A FUNERAL PARLOR...



SUDDENLY, THE SEWER COVER MOVES! A WHITE, GHOSTLY HAND PUSHES IT OPEN! A HAND ALMOST HUMAN BUT ITS SICKLY WHITENESS HINTS OF SOME FANTASTIC CREATURE WHO MOCKS MAN BY ITS SIMILAR APPEARANCE...

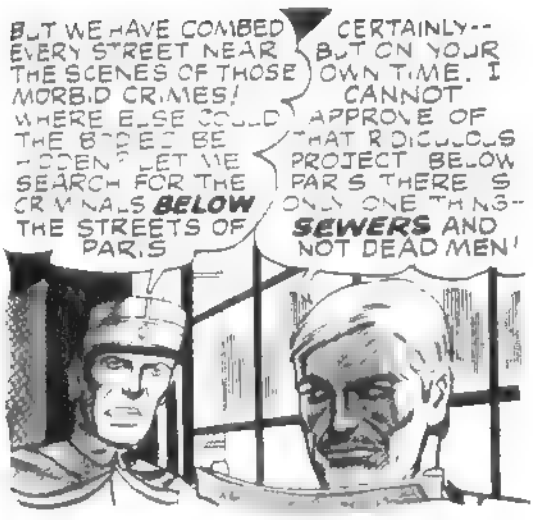
OUT FROM THE DANK, FOUL DEPTHS OF THE SEWERS COME THE GHOST-LIKE CREATURES HUNCHED AND TERRIFYING...THEIR COAL-BLACK EYES STARING WITH AN EVIL FASCINATION AT THE RUMBLING HEARSE!

SILENTLY THEIR BARE, WHITE FEET PAD ACROSS THE COBBLESTONES WITH SURPRISING SPEED, AS THE STRANGE, HUMAN-LIKE MONSTERS SPRING UPON THE HEARSE DRIVER...

WITH GREEDY HANDS THEY PRY OPEN THE COFFIN AND PULL THE COLD CORPSE FROM ITS DOWN THE STREET THEY RACE... CLUTCHING THEIR PRIZE...

THEN THEIR CLAMMY WHITE HANDS PASS THE CORPSE DOWNWARD TO THE DEPTHS OF THE GRIMY SEWER AS ONLY A SCAVENGING RAT WATCHES THE WEIRD, GHASTLY SIGHT...

LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF THE FRENCH SURETÉ INSPECTOR VIDAC MAKES HIS GRIM REPORT...
WE'VE FOUND NO SIGN OF THOSE BODY SNATCHERS. THIS IS THE TENTH CASE THIS MONTH. I'M MORE THAN EVER CONVINCED MY THEORY IS RIGHT.
...YOU MEAN YOUR RIDICULOUS BELIEF THAT THE BODIES ARE STOLEN AND SECRETED UNDERGROUND? NONSENSE


BUT WE HAVE COMBED EVERY STREET NEAR THE SCENES OF THOSE MORBID CRIMES! WHERE ELSE COULD THE BODIES BE HIDDEN? LET ME SEARCH FOR THE CRIMINALS BELOW THE STREETS OF PARIS
CERTAINLY-- BUT ON YOUR OWN TIME. I CANNOT APPROVE OF THAT RIDICULOUS PROJECT. BELOW PARIS THERE IS ONLY ONE THING-- SEWERS AND NOT DEAD MEN!

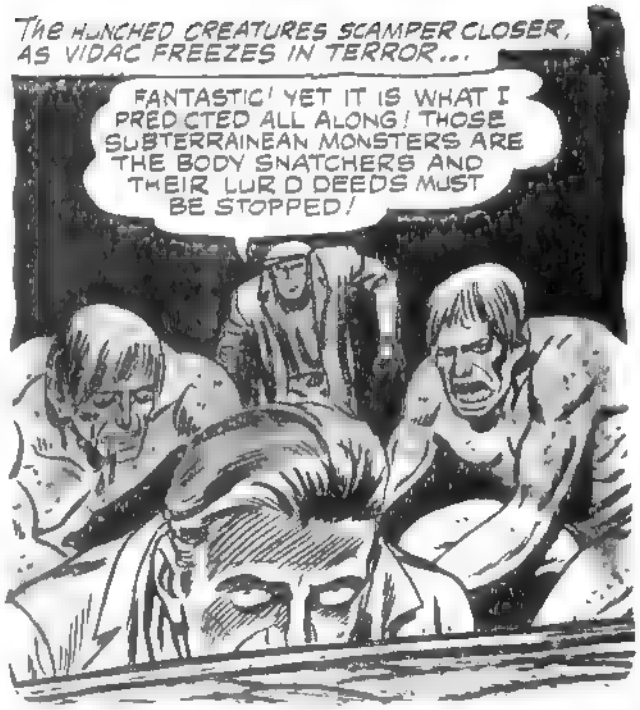
AS NIGHT SHROUDS THE PARIS STREETS, VIDAC CARRIES OUT HIS DETERMINED MISSION...
ALMOST TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO DURING THE REVOLUTION FUGITIVES FROM THE GUILLOTINE TOOK REFUGE FROM THE CITY'S SEWERS. IT'S STILL A PERFECT HIDING PLACE FOR STRANGE CRIMINALS SUCH AS THESE MYSTERIOUS AND AS YET UNSEEN BODY SNATCHERS!

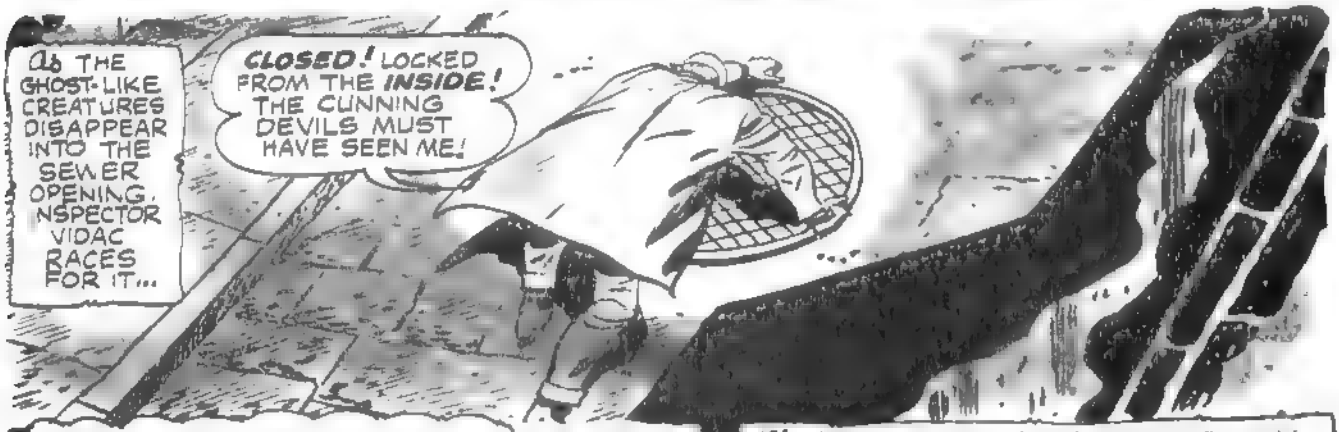
AS INSPECTOR VIDAC MAKES HIS WAY DOWN THE GLOOMY SILENT PASSAGES COLD DARK EYES WATCH HIM...
NOTHING SO FAR. PERHAPS THE CHIEF WAS RIGHT.

SUDDENLY FROM A DARKENED CORNER A WHITE GHOST-LIKE HAND SHOOTS OUT

DOWN THE VILE WATERWAY VIDAC SWIRLS, REACHING FOR SUPPORT..
GOT IT. BUT I'M CERTAIN OF ONE THING NOW--- A HUMAN HAND PUSHED ME IN!

AS VIDAC EMERGES INTO THE DIMLY LIT STREETS, A SHOUT PIERCES THE NIGHT AND WEIRD FIGURES SCURRY ACROSS THE COBBLESTONES AHEAD...
THE CRY CAME FROM THE FUNERAL PARLOR! WHO EVER THOSE PEOPLE ARE, THEY SEEM TO BE CARRYING A CORPSE!


THE HUNCHED CREATURES SCAMPER CLOSER, AS VIDAC FREEZES IN TERROR...
FANTASTIC! YET IT IS WHAT I PREDICTED ALL ALONG! THOSE SUBTERRANEAN MONSTERS ARE THE BODY SNATCHERS AND THEIR LURID DEEDS MUST BE STOPPED!


AS THE GHOST-LIKE CREATURES DISAPPEAR INTO THE SEWER OPENING, INSPECTOR VIDAC RACES FOR IT...
CLOSED! LOCKED FROM THE INSIDE! THE CUNNING DEVILS MUST HAVE SEEN ME!

THERE THEY ARE! OUT OF REACH BUT IN SIGHT! TH-THEY'RE GATHERING AROUND THE CORPSE LIKE HUMAN VULTURES OVER CARRION!

WITH MORBID FASCINATION, INSPECTOR VIDAC WATCHES THE GRIM DESPOILATION OF THE CREATURES' STOLEN PRIZE...
I WAS RIGHT...THEY ARE SOME MAD MUTATION OF THE HUMAN RACE! THEIR ANCESTORS MUST HAVE BEEN FORCED UNDERGROUND... AND NOW... THE DWELLERS OF SEWERS ARE SCAVENGERS OF FLESH!

INSPECTOR VIDAC RACES TO H S CHIEF S HOME...
SIR! WHAT I HAVE MAGINED IS TRUE! EVEN WORSE THE BODY STEALERS ARE UNDER GROUND CREATURES! THEY LIVE IN THE SEWERS OF PARIS!
DID YOU WAKE ME TO TELL ME THIS WILD TALE VIDAC? I'LL HAVE YOU PUT OFF THE FORCE FOR THIS!

BUT I AM TELLING YOU WHAT I ACTUALLY SAW! HUNCHED WHITE MONSTERS!
GET OUT GET OUT!

ANGRY WORDS ECHO IN THE HALL! AGAIN THE CHIEF TRIES TO PUSH VIDAC FROM THE ROOM, AS THE ANGERED INSPECTOR SHOVES BACK AND SUDDENLY...

D-DEAD!
PIERRE! PIERRE!

PANIC OVERCOMES INSPECTOR VIDAC AS THE CHIEF'S WIFE STOOPS OVER THE CORPSE...
YOU KILLED HIM, VIDAC, YOU MURDERER! YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!

ALL DAY, VIDAC FLEES FROM THE SEARCHING GENDARMES, A HUNTED MAN IN A NARROWING CIRCLE OF PURSUIT...
THEY MUST NOT CAPTURE ME! I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN END THIS TERROR ON THE STREETS!

LATER THAT NIGHT, INSPECTOR VIDAC CIRCLES BACK TO THE FUNERAL PARLOR WHERE THE DEAD CHIEF LIES...
MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT! THEY HAVE COME FOR HIM!

AS VIDAC RACES AFTER THE RAIDERS, FROM BELOW, A POLICE WHISTLE SHRILLY SOUNDS...
THEY'RE AFTER ME!

THE CREATURES LEFT THE COVER OFF! THERE'S REFUGE FOR ME HERE THIS TIME! BUT I WON'T BE SAFE HERE LONG IF THOSE MONSTERS SPOT ME!

DOWN THE SHADOWY, DAMP PASSAGE INSPECTOR VIDAC ADVANCES...AND SUDDENLY...
THERE THEY ARE... AND THE CHIEF'S CORPSE WITH THEM!

TH-THEY SEE ME!

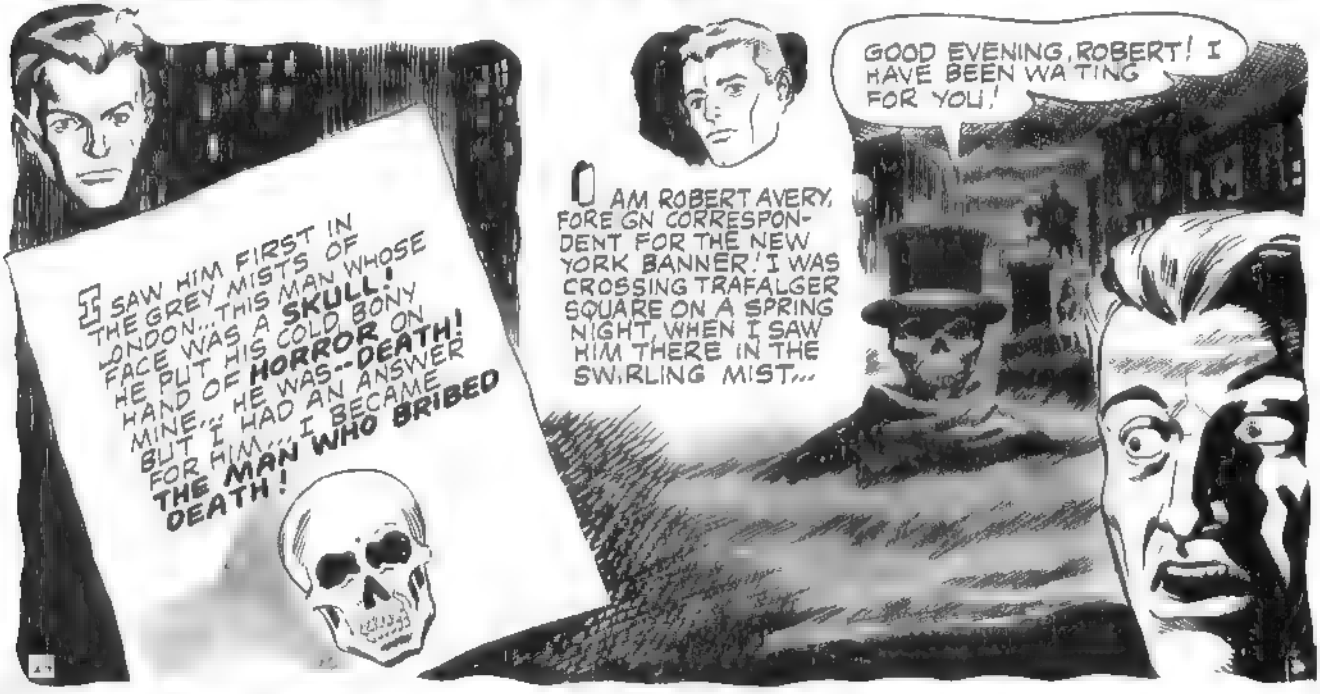
WITH GRIM SILENCE, THE WHITE-FACED HUMAN MOCKERIES START FOR THE FLEEING VIDAC.
THE SEWER TOP IS LOCKED FROM ABOVE!

N-NO! BACK! GET BACK!

LET ME GO! WHAT HAVE YOU TO DO WITH THE LIVING? I KNOW YOUR SECRET--YOU PREY UPON THE DEAD!
YOU KNOW OUR SECRET.. BUT NO ONE ELSE SHALL! DO NOT WORRY! YOU WILL NO LONGER BE AMONG THE LIVING!

HELP! IN THE NAME OF MERCY
GENDARME! I HEARD SOMEONE SCREAMING FROM INSIDE THE SEWER.
IMPOSSIBLE! WE HAVE LOCKED THE SEWERS SO A MURDERER CANNOT ESCAPE IN THEM! WHAT YOU HEARD WAS THE WATER PASSING BELOW!
THE END

DEATH TRAP


I SAW HIM FIRST IN THE GREY MISTS OF LONDON... THIS MAN WHOSE FACE WAS A SKULL! HE PUT HIS COLD BONY HAND OF HORROR ON MINE... HE WAS--DEATH! BUT I HAD AN ANSWER FOR HIM... I BECAME THE MAN WHO BRIBED DEATH!
I AM ROBERT AVERY, FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT FOR THE NEW YORK BANNER! I WAS CROSSING TRAFALGER SQUARE ON A SPRING NIGHT, WHEN I SAW HIM THERE IN THE SWIRLING MIST...
GOOD EVENING, ROBERT! I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!

W-WHO? NO -- NO!
YES AVERY YOU KNOW WHO I AM-- YOUR HEART HAS BEEN BOTHERING YOU LATELY.. IT IS TIME... I AM DEATH!

I PULLED FREE, TERRIFIED AND BEGAN TO RUN..
YOU CAN NEVER ESCAPE! I WILL CALL FOR YOU IN THE MORNING ROBERT AVERY!

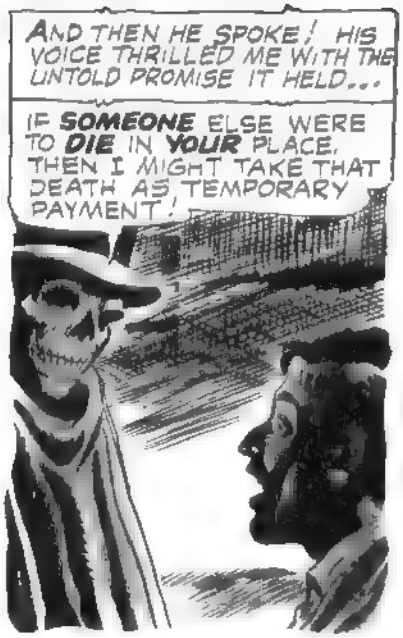
I FLED TO MY HOTEL ROOM, LOCKED THE DOOR AND PUSHED THE HEAVY FURNITURE AGAINST IT!
NOBODY CAN GET AT ME NOW! NOT EVEN ...DEATH!

I LAY BACK WEAKLY ACROSS MY BED; I SLEPT AFTER AWHILE, AND IN MY SLEEP, I DREAMED...
GETTING HARDER TO WALK... LOST IN THESE SWAMPS. GETTING W-WEAKER

IN MY DREAM, I FELL SPRAWLING.. I CRAWLED ALONG, KNOWING I MUST NOT STOP...
GOT TO KEEP GOING! MUST NOT BE LATE FOR MY APPOINTMENT

I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOU!
I TOLD YOU YOU COULD NOT ESCAPE ME!

NO! NO! THERE MUST BE A WAY! SOME WAY TO ESCAPE YOU! TELL ME WHAT IT IS!


AND THEN HE SPOKE! HIS VOICE THRILLED ME WITH THE UNTOLD PROMISE IT HELD...
IF SOMEONE ELSE WERE TO DIE IN YOUR PLACE, THEN I MIGHT TAKE THAT DEATH AS TEMPORARY PAYMENT!

I WOKE FROM THAT DREAM SHAKING ALL OVER. THEN A KNOCK SOUNDED ON MY DOOR!
GOT TO-- THINK! I-- WHO'S THAT?
KNOCK! KNOCK!

MY HANDS SHOOK WITH FEAR! MY HEART SLAMMED IN MY CHEST!
IT'S HE! I WON'T OPEN THE DOOR... I CAN'T-- I CAN'T--

AND THEN I HEARD A WOMAN SPEAKING... IT WAS THE MAID...
PLEASE SIR? MAY I CLEAN UP YOUR ROOM?

COME IN, MY DEAR! COME IN!

I DON'T HAVE LONG, NOW! I'LL BE GONE IN A LITTLE WHILE!
YES, MY DEAR... YOU WILL!

I MADE MY PLANS CALMLY! I WAS SAFE...

I'LL CATCH THE 11:20! BE IN LIVERPOOL IN A FEW HOURS... NO ONE WILL CONNECT ME WITH THIS THING!

BEHIND ME I LEFT A DEAD GIRL AND THE SKULL-FACED THING THAT TOOK HER LIFE AS A BRIBE FOR **MINE!**

FROM THAT DAY ON, I KNEW I NEED FEAR DEATH NO MORE... NOT SO LONG AS THERE WERE MEN AND WOMEN TO PAY FOR MY BORROWED TIME!

NOT FEARING DEATH, I CAN DO **ANYTHING!**

I CABLED THE BANNER FOR AN ASSIGNMENT IN KOREA! WITHIN A WEEK I WAS FLYING OVER THE OCEAN...

ON LESS THAN A MONTH, I WAS IN KOREA...

BUT THIS IS A VERY DANGEROUS MISSION I'M SENDING THE PATROL OUT ON!

I WON'T BE KILLED! I INSIST ON GOING!

I LAUGHED AS I RAN BETWEEN THE EXPLODING SHELLS... WHAT NEED HAD I TO FEAR **GUNFIRE?**

HA-HA! THEY'RE ONLY WASTING GOOD AMMO ON ME!

YOU'RE NUTS, BUT I HAVE TO ADMIRE YOU! YOU HAVE NERVES OF STEEL!

I'M GETTING A STORY I'D NEVER GET BACK IN HEADQUARTERS!

I SAT WR TING MY NOTES WH LE A SPRAY OF MACHINE-GUN BULLETS CHEWED UP THE GROUND NEAR MY TENT...

THE AME N THE EYES OF THE G I's MADE MY LIPS TWIST IN AMUSEMENT...
BRAVEST GUY I EVER SAW!
THERE HE GOES...THAT'S H M!

MY COMBAT REPORTS BROUGHT ME FAME! I NOW WROTE A SYNDICATED COLUMN AS WELL...
I'M GOING WITH THIS TANK ATTACK CAPTAIN! I NEED SOME NEWS FOR MY PAPERS!
THE BOYS'LL BE GLAD TO HAVE YOU!

AND THEN ONE NIGHT AS I WORKED LATE...

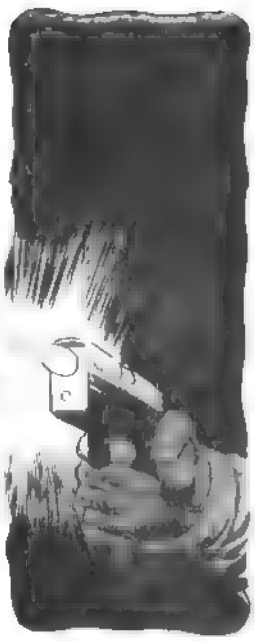
YOU!!
ARE YOU SURPRISED TO SEE ME? I TOLD YOU YOUR BRIBE WOULD BE ONLY A TEMPORARY ONE!

NO--WAIT! I HAVE A GUN I'LL USE IT! I'LL KILL SOMEBODY SO I CAN LIVE ON!

THAT NIGHT, I STAGGERED OUT ONTO THE MUD-SPLATTERED KOREAN FIELDS...
I'LL FIND SOMEBODY OUT HERE

AFTER A MILE OF WALKING I FOUND A LITTLE FARMHOUSE.

THEY STARTED UP IN ALARM AS I WALKED IN THE DOOR.



I WAS FREE AGAIN. BUT KOREA BECAME A NIGHTMARE PLACE TO ME! I CABLED THE OFFICE REQUESTING A TRANSFER.. SOME WEEKS LATER, I WAS IN RED CHINA...
I'M AFTER SOME HUMAN INTEREST STORIES ABOUT RED OPPRESSIONS! IT WON'T BE EASY TO GET INFORMATION OUT OF HERE...BUT IF I DO-- I'M MADE!

A DOCTOR OUGHT TO HAVE THAT SORT OF NEWS AT HIS FINGERTIPS. I'LL PAY HIM HELL... PROMISE I WON'T MENTION HIS NAME AND-

YOU!!
THE MAN AND WOMAN YOU KILLED IN KOREA WOULD HAVE DIED THIS MORNING WHEN A BOMB LANDED ON THEIR HOUSE. THE TIME YOU BOUGHT IS UP!

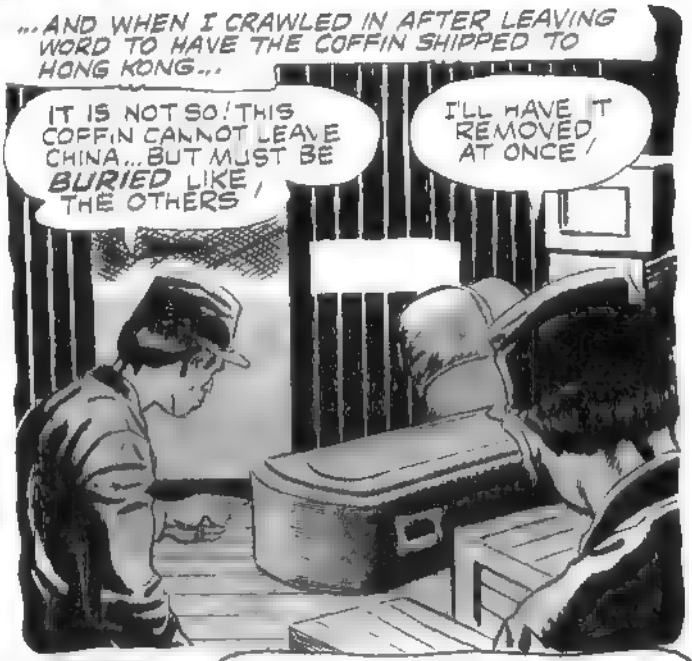
NO...WAIT.. LOOK! THIS TEST TUBE OF DISEASE CULTURES... IF I SMASH IT...A PLAGUE WILL START--- THAT WILL BUY ME MORE TIME! MANY YEARS OF TIME

I SMASHED THE TUBE AND BILLIONS OF DEADLY GERMS SPREAD THROUGH THE AIR! PANIC AND DEATH BECAME THE ORDER OF THE DAY... BUT, NOW, TIME WAS MY GOLDEN RING AND I KNEW HOW TO USE IT!

THROUGH A SERIES OF CONNECTIONS IN THE CORRUPT CHINESE OFFICIALDOM, I MANAGED A PASSPORT TO LEAVE CHINA...
AN IMPORTANT DOCUMENT, MR. AVERY.. VERY SCARCE IN THESE TROUBLED DAYS!
SCARCE? HUH! ALL YOU NEED IS MONEY! YOUR PRICE IS OUTRAGEOUS!

LATER WHEN I REACHED THE STATION I WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN THAT THERE WERE NO TRAINS LEAVING CHINA TO THE FREE CITY OF HONG KONG!
GO HOME! THERE ARE NO PASSENGER TRAINS LEAVING CHINA FOR HONG KONG...ONLY FREIGHT!
UHOH! I DIDN'T PLAN ON THAT... BUT I'VE AN IDEA!

IT WAS SIMPLE, ALL I HAD TO DO WAS ORDER A COFFIN FROM THE LOCAL CRAFTSMEN!
...AND I WANT HOLES IN THE TOP! THIS SHOULD COVER THE COST!
...OF COURSE, MR. AVERY!


...AND WHEN I CRAWLED IN AFTER LEAVING WORD TO HAVE THE COFFIN SHIPPED TO HONG KONG...
IT IS NOT SO! THIS COFFIN CANNOT LEAVE CHINA... BUT MUST BE BURIED LIKE THE OTHERS!
I'LL HAVE IT REMOVED AT ONCE!

I WAS FAST ASLEEP WHEN THEY REMOVED THE COFFIN FROM THE TRAIN, BUT WHEN I FELT THE SPRINKLES OF EARTH THROUGH THE HOLES, I KNEW I WAS BEING BURIED! I TRIED TO SCREAM, BUT FEAR LOWERED MY VOICE TO A WHISPER...

...WHY ME? DIDN'T I PROVIDE SUBSTITUTES BY THE THOUSANDS! NO! YOU CAN'T! LISTEN TO ME! THERE MUST BE A WAY OUT--- LISTEN...

I HEAR YOU! SOON YOUR SUFFERING WILL BE OVER! NO MORE SUBSTITUTES! HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU THINK YOU CAN BRIBE DEATH?
GOODBYE, MR AVERY!
THE END

THE WITCH'S HOUSE IS HAUNTED
SAM BOLTON WAS AN EVIL MAN AND THAT WAS HIS UNDOING. IT HAD ALL STEMMED FROM AN OVERPOWERING GREED... GREED THAT USED THE POWER OF SUGGESTION TO KILL! WHEN THE DEED WAS ACCOMPLISHED ALL THAT SAM WANTED SEEMED TO BE IN THE HIS HANDS... THEN THE VOICE OF THE UNKNOWN WAS HEARD... IT SHOOK THE OLD HAUNTED HOUSE OF THE WITCH

IT ALL BEGAN THE MORNING ROBERT BOLTON AND HIS NEPHEW SAM MOVED INTO THE NEW HOUSE...
YOU PROMISED TO TELL ME WHY YOU BOUGHT THIS OLD HOUSE, UNCLE
I WAS AFRAID TO LET YOU KNOW THE REAL REASON... AFRAID YOU WOULDN'T COME TO LIVE WITH ME NOW THAT I'M GETTING OLD!

YOU SEE, THIS OLD HOUSE WAS OWNED BY A WITCH AND IS KNOWN TO BE HAUNTED!
THE TOWNSFOLK ALSO TOLD ME SHE HANG HERSELF RIGHT IN THIS HOUSE!

SAM BOLTON HATED HIS UNCLE.. BUT HIS GREEDY NATURE COULD ONLY THINK OF THE MONEY HE WOULD INHERIT AND THE IDEA OF LIVING IN A WITCHE'S HAUNTED HOUSE SEEMED TO PRESENT A WAY OF HASTENING THAT END...
MAYBE IT IS POSSIBLE TO FRIGHTEN A MAN TO DEATH! IT'S WORTH A TRY!

DURING THE NEXT WEEK SAM MADE SEVERAL PURCHASES IN VARIOUS ELECTRICAL SHOPS IN TOWN AND THEN WAITED FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT...
I'LL BE AWAY ALL DAY SAM!
ALL RIGHT, UNCLE... I'LL TAKE CARE OF THINGS!

AS SOON AS HIS UNCLE LEFT, SAM SET TO WORK HURRIEDLY...
HE'LL NEVER FIND THIS LOUD SPEAKER IN HERE!

CAREFULLY HIDING ALL EVIDENCE OF HIS WORK, SAM LED A WIRE FROM THE LOUDSPEAKER TO A MIKE IN HIS BEDROOM...
UNCLE ROBERT IS DUE FOR A BIG SURPRISE TONIGHT!

AND LATE THAT NIGHT WHEN SAM WAS SURE HIS UNCLE WAS ASLEEP
NOW FOR A GAME OF DEATH
WH-- WHAT?
ROBERT BOLTON! YOU MUST DIE! YOU MUST DIE! YOU CANNOT LIVE!!
AS THE SEPULCHRAL VOICE ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED THROUGH THE HOUSE THE OLD MAN'S HEART BEAT FASTER WITH FEAR THEN HE RAN...
YOU MUST DIE!
DIE.
UNCLE! WHAT'S IT?
THE VOICES... DID YOU HEAR THEM?
VOICES? NO YOU MUST HAVE IMAGINED IT UNCLE I HEARD NOTHING AT ALL! YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE OLD WITCH HAS BEEN HERE
I I DON'T KNOW TH- THEY SEEMED SO SO. REAL!

THEN THE REIGN OF TERROR BEGAN! NIGHT AFTER NIGHT SAM CONTINUED HIS DIABOLICAL PLAN... WAITING... WAITING...
YOU CANNOT LIVE, ROBERT BOLTON!
YOU MUST DIE!
NO NO!

YOU MUST HANG YOURSELF! HANG YOURSELF!
STOP! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE STOP STOP!
HANG YOURSELF!

AND THE VOICES BEGAN TO HAVE THE EFFECT SAM WANTED. THE UNCLE BECAME MORE AND MORE FRIGHTENED BUT SAM CONTINUED HIS PROTESTATIONS THAT HE HAD HEARD NOTHING
YOU SLEPT SO LITTLE UNCLE I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT YOUR BREAKFAST IN BED.
IT'S THE VOICES, SAM. I'M WORRIED. I THINK WE'D BETTER MOVE

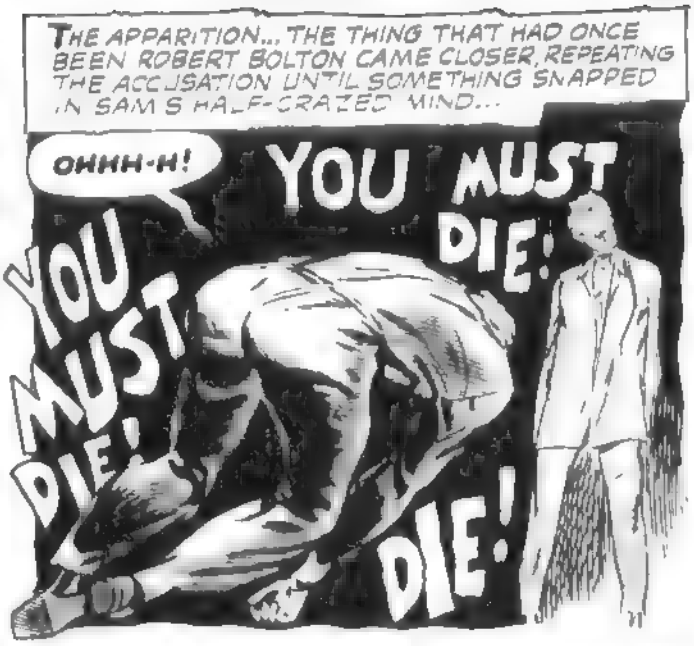
I..I CAN'T THINK ANYMORE SAM.. YOU'LL HAVE TO HELP ME!
SURE, UNCLE... I'LL HELP YOU! RIGHT INTO YOUR GRAVE!

ONE NIGHT SAM FELT SURE HE WOULD SOON SEE THE RESULT OF HIS WORK... HIS UNCLE WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY SUSCEPTABLE TO THE GHOSTLY VOICE...
HANG YOURSELF ROBERT BOLTON HANG YOURSELF

SAM WAITED PATIENTLY AS LONG MINUTES WENT PAST. THEN HE SNEAKED UP TO HIS UNCLE'S ROOM...
HE DID IT. IT WORKED. HE'S DEAD AT LAST.

SAM RACED DOWN THE STAIRS TO THE TELEPHONE, AND...
IS THIS THE POLICE? THIS IS SAM BOLTON... IT'S ABOUT MY UNCLE... HE... HE'S DEAD.. HUNG HIMSELF!
THEN IT HAPPENED! AS SAM PUT DOWN THE RECEIVER, SILENTLY REJOICING HIS SUCCESS, TERROR CAME OUT OF THE AIR AROUND HIM...
WH-WHAT?
YOU MUST PAY FOR YOUR CRIME! YOU MUST PAY!
MY UNCLE! HE MUST STILL BE ALIVE! HE MUST HAVE FOUND THE MICROPHONE! HE'S TRYING TO FRIGHTEN ME
YOU MUST DIE!
DIE!
DIE!
DIE!
DIE!
SAM RACED TO HIS ROOM! HIS HEART POUNDING WILDLY WITH UNCONTROLLED FEAR... FEAR THAT MOUNTED TO A HIGHER PITCH WHEN HE OPENED HIS CLOSET DOOR.
THERE'S NO ONE HERE! AND YET THE VOICES... IT CAN'T BE! IT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE! I MADE THOSE VOICES
SAM RUSHED OUT INTO THE HALLWAY CONSCIOUS ONLY OF THE VOICES THAT REVERBRATED THROUGH THE HOUSE. BUT COMING TOWARDS HIM FROM HIS UNCLE'S ROOM, HE SAW
UNCLE ROBERT!
NO! YOU'RE DEAD! YOU'RE DEAD!

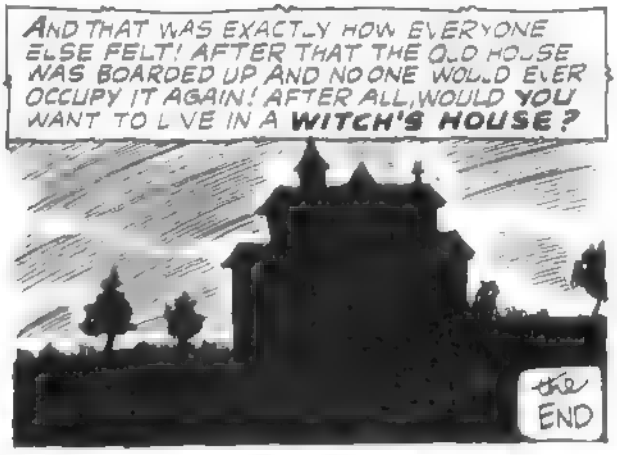
YOU ARE A MURDERER,
YOU MUST PAY FOR YOUR CRIME!
PAY FOR YOUR CRIME!


THE APPARITION... THE THING THAT HAD ONCE BEEN ROBERT BOLTON CAME CLOSER, REPEATING THE ACCUSATION UNTIL SOMETHING SNAPPED IN SAM'S HALF-CRAZED MIND...
OHHH-H!
YOU MUST DIE!
YOU MUST DIE!
DIE!

WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVED, THERE WAS NO ANSWER TO THEIR RING! THEY FINALLY ENTERED BY FORCING A WINDOW...
THIS ONE'S DEAD ALL RIGHT! FROM THE LOOKS OF HIM, I'D SAY HE DIED OF FRIGHT!
LOOK OVER HERE!

I GUESS THIS IS THE MAN WE RECEIVED THE CALL ABOUT! WONDER WHAT KILLED THE OTHER ONE?
I DON'T KNOW!

BETTER CALL THE CORONER...
YEAH, AN' MAKE IT FAST. THIS HOUSE HAS A "REP" OF BEING HAUNTED BY A WITCH


AND THAT WAS EXACTLY HOW EVERYONE ELSE FELT! AFTER THAT THE OLD HOUSE WAS BOARDED UP AND NO ONE WOULD EVER OCCUPY IT AGAIN! AFTER ALL, WOULD YOU WANT TO LIVE IN A WITCH'S HOUSE?
END

DEBT of FEAR

OUT OF THE DARK AGES THE **BLOODY THING** STALKED TO COLLECT A TERRIBLE DEBT! WHEREVER **IT** STRUCK THERE WAS HORROR, DISEASE AND DEATH! ONLY THE CRUEL DYING OF A LOVELY GIRL COULD APPEASE THE WALKING DEATH...

SO THE STORY THAT APPEARS IS...

LE TEMPS

THE YOUNG COUNTESS DE MALATROIT DIED TODAY IN THE FAMILY'S OLD CHATEAU NEAR CHARTRES! CAUSE OF DEATH WAS SAID TO BE COMPLICATIONS AS A RESULT OF PNEUMONIA! THE COUNTESS, LAST OF AN ILLUSTRIOUS LINE OF FRENCH ARISTOCRACY WAS ONLY TWENTY-THREE! SHE

BUT THAT NIGHT A LITTLE GROUP OF ANXIOUS MEN GATHER IN A ROOM IN THE OLD CHATEAU...
GENTLEMEN, I TELL YOU I AM SURE OF MY FACTS! WE MUST FACE IT!
INCREDIBLE!
BUT HOW?

THE COUNTESS DIED OF THE PLAGUE! THE RED DEATH!

BUT, M'SIEUR, YOU MUST BE WRONG! THERE HAS NOT BEEN A CASE OF--OF THIS RED DEATH IN 500 YEARS!
I KNOW! BUT NEVERTHELESS SHE DIED OF IT! I DO NOT UNDERSTAND IT EITHER!

GOODBYE, MY FRIENDS! REMEMBER TO KEEP SECRECY!
I WILL REMAIN AND SEE WHAT I CAN FIND IN THIS OLD CHATEAU!

WHO KNOWS? THERE MAY BE SOME CLUE IN THESE OLD PAPERS! AS THE FAMILY I CERTAINLY HAVE THE RIGHT--
WALLAH!- THIS PAPER!

HERE! IN THIS OLD DIARY OF THE FIRST COUNT! THE ANSWER!

THROUGH THE RED MISTS THE LAWYER SEEMS TO GO BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES, TO A TOWN GRIPPED BY **PLAGUE**..

WE'LL ALL DIE OF THE **PLAGUE**!

BEWARE THE **RED DEATH**! KEEP TO YOUR HOMES!

THEY FALL IN THE STREETS..

GAAA-MY HEART BURSTS! I BLEED--THE CURSED RED DEATH HAS ME!

AND THE DEATH CARTS ROLL...

LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER HEAVY DAY, HENRI! THEY DIE LIKE FLIES! **HO**-BRING OUT YOUR DEAD!

AHEAD THERE, A HOUSE WITH A CROSS!

PLAGUE HERE, SURE ENOUGH! BUT THEY BRING OUT NO DEAD!

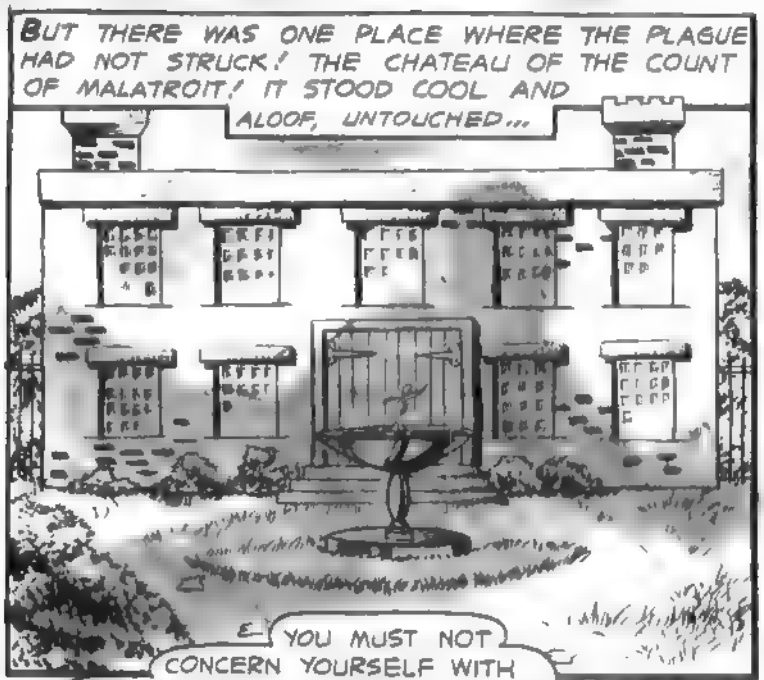
HA-HA! CAN THE DEAD CARRY THE DEAD! COME, FOOL!

A LOVELY LASS, OR WAS BEFORE THE RED DEATH TOOK HER! WELL--ON TO THE NEXT HOUSE!

AND THE NEXT--AND THE NEXT! THERE IS NO END!

ANOTHER LOAD IN THE PITS! AND WE START AGAIN!

SOON IT WILL BE US! BRRR!


BUT THERE WAS ONE PLACE WHERE THE PLAGUE HAD NOT STRUCK! THE CHATEAU OF THE COUNT OF MALATROIT! IT STOOD COOL AND ALOOF, UNTOUCHED...

SHE IS SO INNOCENT, SO BEAUTIFUL! I'D DEFY DEMONS TO PROTECT HER!
MY HUSBAND! WHAT NEWS OF THE PLAGUE TODAY? I WORRY FOR OUR POOR PEOPLE!

YOU MUST NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THE RABBLE, MY DEAR! I THINK ONLY OF YOU, AND OF YOUR SAFETY! HERE, WITHIN THE WALLS YOU CAN FORGET THE PLAGUE!

BUT OUTSIDE THE GATES...
PLEASE! YOU HAVE MEDICINES!
STAND BACK, YOU RIFF-RAFF! NONE ENTERS THE CHATEAU GROUNDS!

THERE IS THE COUNT NOW! HELP US, SIRE!
YOU DENY YOUR PEOPLE AID! CURSE YOU!
I CAN DO NOTHING! BE GONE!

WHY DO OUR PEOPLE WAIT, HUSBAND? CAN WE NOT DO SOMETHING FOR THEM?
NO, MY DEAR! THE POOR FOOLS ARE DOOMED! THEY WOULD ONLY INFECT US IF WE HELPED!

TIME PASSES AND THE RED DEATH STILL RUNS AMUCK! BUT INSIDE THE CHATEAU THERE IS HOPE AND JOY...
HERE IS YOUR NEW CHILD, SIRE! A LUSTY BOY!
AN HE.R! I HAVE WISHED FOR ONE SO LONG!

THERE, LITTLE ONE, DO NOT CRY! SOMETIME, WHEN ALL THIS TROUBLE HAS PASSED, YOU WILL BE THE COUNT OF MALA-TROIT!

BUT THAT NIGHT IN THE SHADOW CLOTTED BEDROOM...
HAH-HAH! AHH-HA-HA!
W-WHO ARE YOU? WHY DO YOU STAND THERE AND LAUGH?

EEEE! YOU! YOU ARE-THE RED DEATH!
HEH-HEH! DID YOU THINK YOUR WALLS COULD KEEP ME OUT?

Y-YOU! HAVE YOU COME FOR MY CHILD?
NOT THE CHILD! FOR YOU, MY PRETTY ONE! YOU ARE TO BE TAKEN!

SUDDENLY...
THE RED DEATH! YOU SHALL NOT TAKE HER! I WILL KILL YOU!
YOU ARE A FOOL, COUNT! NONE CAN SLAY ME! I AM THE RED DEATH!

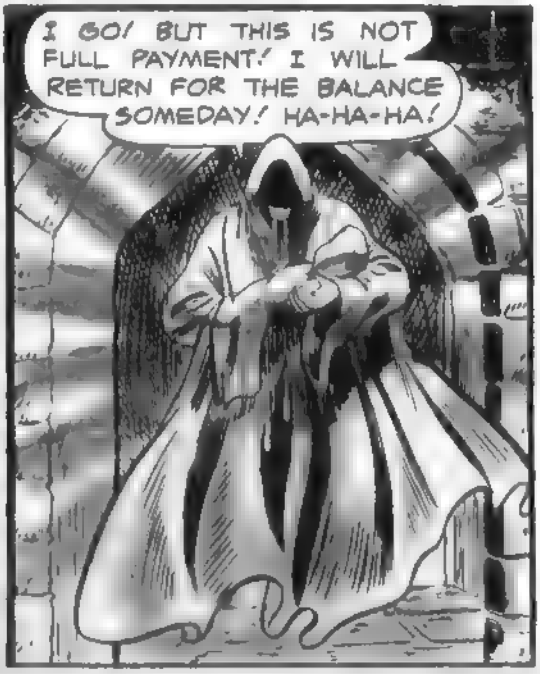
YOU SHALL NOT TAKE HER! ASK ANYTHING BUT THAT!
DO NOT BARGAIN WITH ME! I MUST HAVE A LIFE!

I KNOW--TAKE THE CHILD! SPARE MY WIFE!

I'LL DO IT! GIVE ME THE CHILD NOW!
YES, OF COURSE! YOU CAN HAVE IT!
NO! NOT MY BABY!

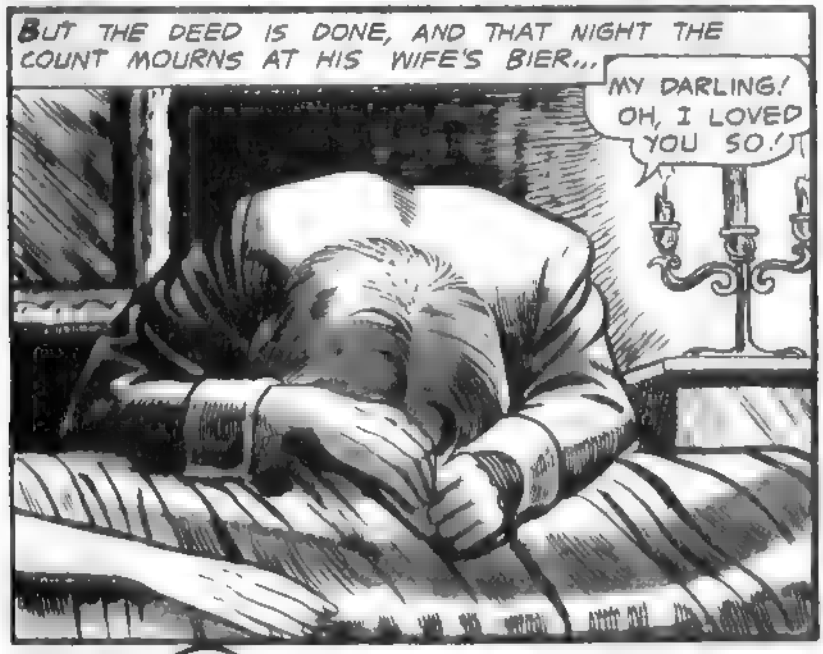
NO, MY HUSBAND! PLEASE! I WILL GO-ONLY SPARE...
I COMMAND IT! GIVE ME THE CHILD!

THANK YOU, SIRE! FOR THE MOMENT I AM SATISFIED! BUT A DEBT IS STILL OWED ME!
HERE-TAKE THE CHILD! NOW GO! GO!


I GO! BUT THIS IS NOT FULL PAYMENT! I WILL RETURN FOR THE BALANCE SOMEDAY! HA-HA-HA!

Y-YOU GAVE MY CHILD TO THAT MONSTROUS THING! YOU MURDERER! FIEND!
NO-DON'T SAY THAT! I COULD NOT BEAR TO LOSE YOU!

BEFORE HE CAN STOP HER...
I WILL JOIN MY BABY- THIS WAY!
STOP! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! NO!


BUT THE DEED IS DONE, AND THAT NIGHT THE COUNT MOURNS AT HIS WIFE'S BIER...
MY DARLING! OH, I LOVED YOU SO!

SUDDENLY A FETID STENCH FILLS THE ROOM...
THAT SHADOW! YOU AGAIN!
YES, ME! I'VE COME FOR THE BALANCE OF YOUR DEBT!

TAKE ME! I GO GLADLY! I WOULD BE WITH MY WIFE!
YOU! HA-HA!

I DON'T WANT YOU! BUT YOU CHEATED ME, AND YOU SHALL PAY! LIVE LONG AND SUFFER! I WILL COLLECT MY DEBT IN THE END!

FORGIVE ME, OH LORD, FOR MY SINS! DO NOT LET THIS THING VISIT THEM ON MY FAMILY!

YEARS PASS UNTIL AT LAST THE COUNT IS NEAR DEATH IN A MONASTERY...
THE RED DEATH-- IT WILL COME BACK! I OWE A DEBT!
POOR MAN! AGAIN HE SPEAKS OF THE RED DEATH! BUT THAT VANISHED LONG AGO!

THE LAWYER FINISHES HIS STUDY OF THE OLD PAPERS...
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT! DID THE RED DEATH COME BACK AFTER ALL THE CENTURIES?

SOMETHING STIRS IN THE SHADOWS..
WHO'S THERE?
ONLY ME! HA-HA! DO NOT BE AFRAID!

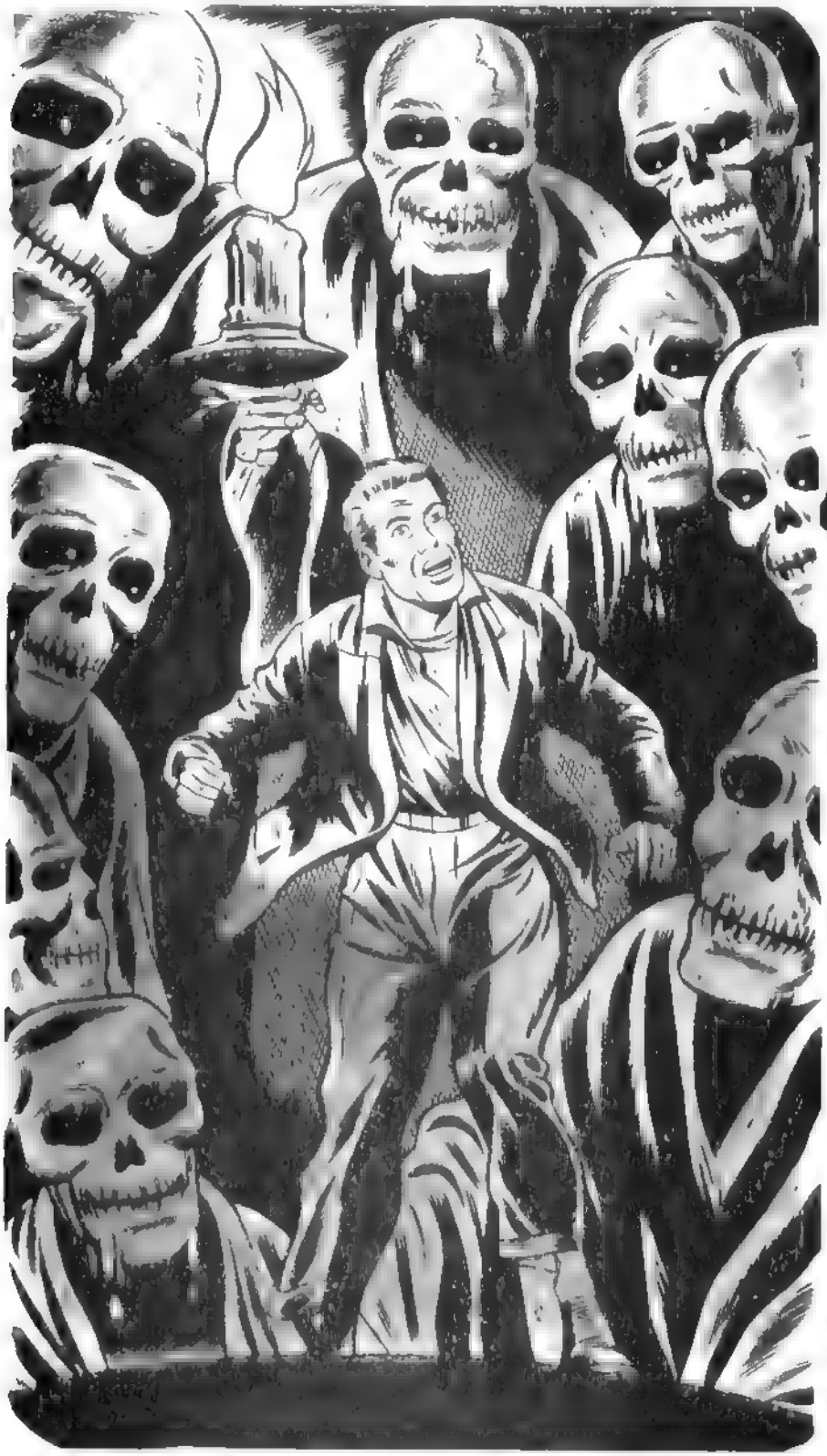
YOU! THE RED DEATH COME BACK! BUT...
I GO NOW, FOREVER! I'VE BEEN PAID-BY THE LAST OF THE MALATROITS!

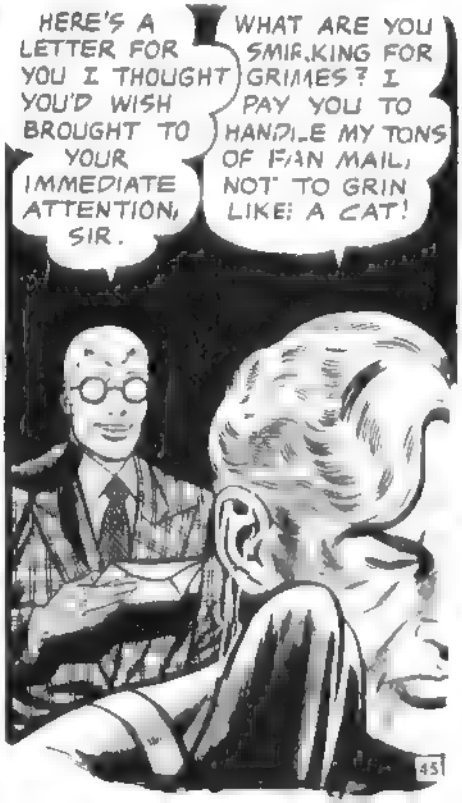
THE SUN COMES UP..
THAT'S THE END OF IT, THEN! THE END OF THE MALATROITS-- AND-THE RED DEATH!

TWO ON THE AISLE... OF DEATH!

RONALD HAMLY DIDN'T WANT TO DIE. HE HAD A FIERCE LUST FOR THE EASY COMFORTS THAT FILM STARDOM HAD BROUGHT TO HIM. HE SHUDDERED AT THE THOUGHT OF SWAPPING HIS LUXURIOUS EXISTENCE FOR THE MOULDERING DANKNESS OF THE GRAVE. AND SO RONALD SWEATED, AND SCHEMED, AND PLOTTED, UNTIL HE STRUCK UPON THE STARTLING INSPIRATION THAT WAS TO MAKE HIM...

THE MAN WHO TRIED TO OUTWIT DEATH!

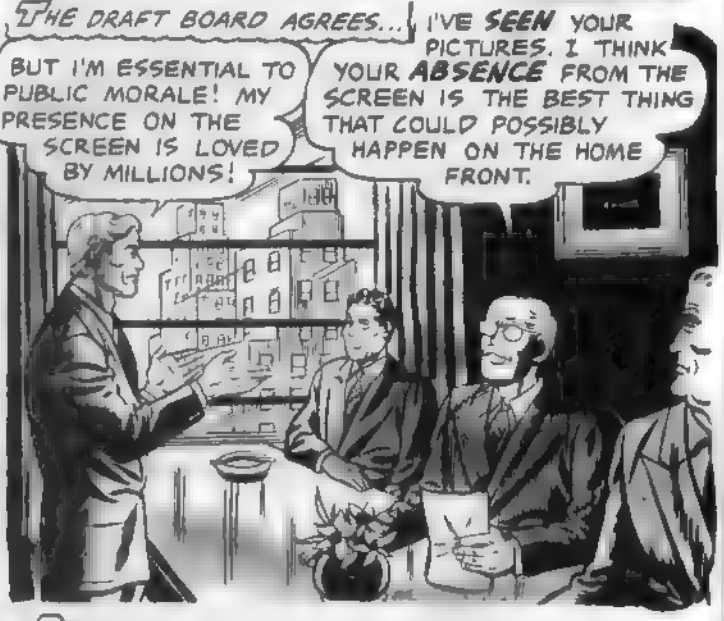




AAIIIEEEE!
RONALD! WHAT'S WRONG?

WHAT WAS IN THAT LETTER, GRIMES?
HIS DRAFT NOTICE!

IS IT TRUE? CAN THEY DRAFT ME?
OFF-HAND, I'D SAY YES! YOU'RE UNDER TWENTY-SIX, AND FROM THE WAY YOU EAT LIKE A HORSE, YOU MUST BE HEALTHY.


THE DRAFT BOARD AGREES...
I'VE SEEN YOUR PICTURES. I THINK YOUR ABSENCE FROM THE SCREEN IS THE BEST THING THAT COULD POSSIBLY HAPPEN ON THE HOME FRONT.
BUT I'M ESSENTIAL TO PUBLIC MORALE! MY PRESENCE ON THE SCREEN IS LOVED BY MILLIONS!

DITTO, THE DRAFT BOARD MEDICAL EXAMINER.
MY FEET HAVE BEEN HURTING FOR YEARS, DOCTOR. DO YOU THINK THEY MAY BE DEFORMED?
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU THAT A HITCH IN THE ARMY WON'T FIX! YOU'RE IN, HAMLY!

DRAFTED, RONALD HAMLY HAS A HORRIBLY REALISTIC REOCCURRING NIGHTMARE...
FIX BAYONETS, MEN! WE'RE GOING TO ATTACK!
N-NO! I'LL BE KILLED!

RONALD'S DREAM MOUNTS IN HORROR...
RA-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT
THE SLAUGHTER'S AWFUL!
I— I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY! RUN SOMEWHERE AND HIDE!
YOU GO NOWHERE, YANKEE-BOY!
GET HIM!
EEEEEEE
HAAA—AAA! CUT HIM! SLICE HIM!
INTO LITTLE PIECES!
AAIIIIGHHHH! HELP! TH—THEY'RE TORTURING ME!!!
AW, SHADDUP, WILL YA?
HE'S AT IT AGAIN!
THAT— THAT DREAM! IT SEEMED SO REAL! LIKE A HORRIBLE PROPHECY OF THINGS TO COME! BUT IT C-CAN'T HAPPEN TO ME! I WON'T LET IT!

YET THE DREAM PERSISTED! AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, HALF OUT OF HIS MIND WITH FRIGHT, RONALD GOT AN IDEA!

IT'LL WORK! IT'S GOT TO WORK!

AS HIS BUDDIES SLEPT, RONALD CRAWLED OUT OF HIS BUNK, AND UNDER THE EERIE LIGHT OF THE MOON, DONNED MAKE-UP OUT OF HIS PRECIOUS PORTABLE KIT...

IT OUGHT TO BE EASY! I'VE MADE MYSELF UP TO LOOK LIKE A CORPSE MANY A TIME!

BR-RRR! IT EVEN GIVES ME THE SHIVERS!

RONALD REMOVES THE MAKE-UP. NEXT DAY, WHILE ON PASS, HE VISITS A DRUGGIST ACQUAINTANCE...

SURE I CAN SELL YOU SOME PILLS THAT WILL GREATLY LESSEN THE BEATING OF YOUR HEART SO THAT EVEN A DOCTOR WOULD THINK YOU WERE DEAD. BUT WHY?

DON'T ASK QUESTIONS. JUST TAKE THIS MONEY AND GIVE ME THE PILLS!

HAMLY'S OUTFIT WAS SHIPPED DIRECTLY TO THE KOREAN FRONT...

FUNNY! YOU DON'T SEEM WORRIED ABOUT DYING!

WHY SHOULD I? I'VE GOT A PLAN!

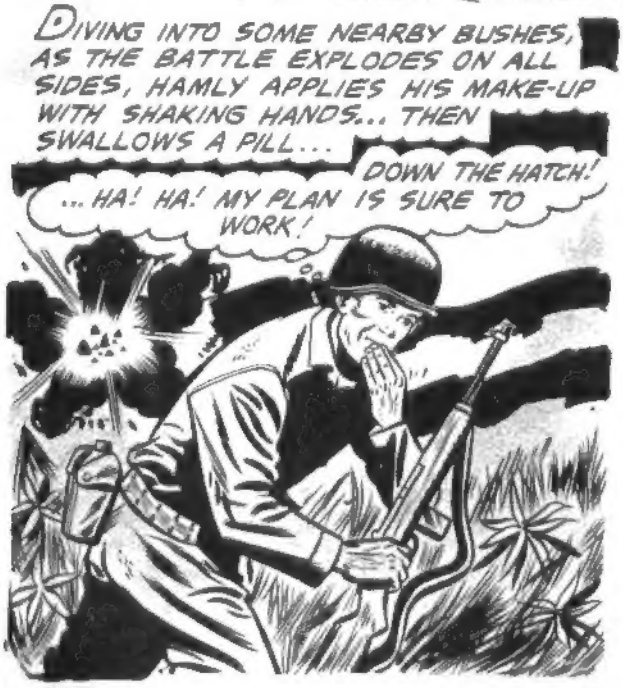
THE SAPS! LET THEM BE THE BIG HEROES... DEAD HEROES! ME, I'M GONNA STAY ALIVE!

YEAH! I'LL STAY ALIVE... BY PRETENDING TO BE DEAD! NO GOOK IS GOING TO BOTHER A DEAD MAN!

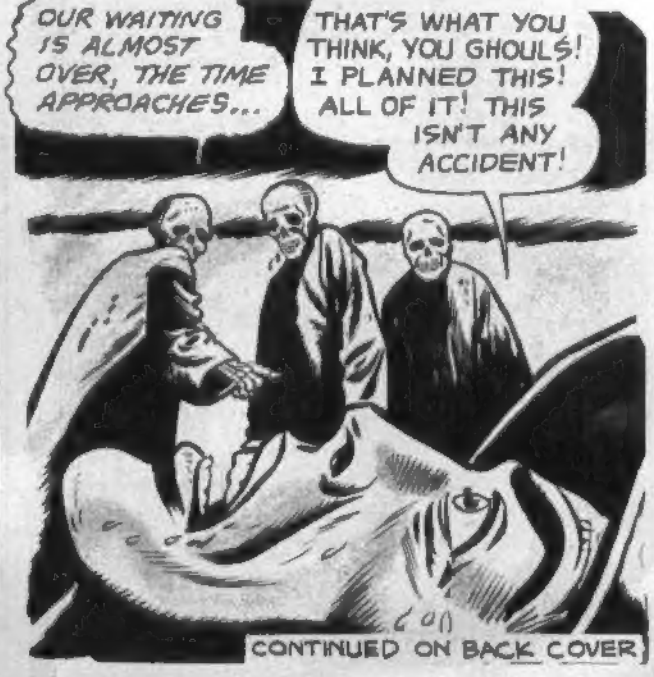
THE MINUTE WE GET INTO ACTION, I'LL SLIP AWAY, DON MAKE-UP SO I LOOK LIKE A CORPSE, THEN I'LL SWALLOW THE PILL THAT WILL PUT ME INTO A DEATH-LIKE TRANCE!

THEN, WHEN THE FIGHTING IS ALL OVER, AND MY BODY BECOMES ANIMATED AGAIN, I'LL REMOVE THE MAKE-UP. NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER! THAT REOCCURRING DREAM OF MINE WILL NEVER COME TRUE! I'LL COME OUT OF THIS WAR ALIVE!

FIX BAYONETS, MEN! WE'RE GOING TO ATTACK!
IT'S JUST LIKE IN MY NIGHTMARE! BUT THERE'RE GOING TO BE SOME CHANGES MADE!


DIVING INTO SOME NEARBY BUSHES, AS THE BATTLE EXPLODES ON ALL SIDES, HAMLY APPLIES HIS MAKE-UP WITH SHAKING HANDS... THEN SWALLOWS A PILL...
DOWN THE HATCH!
...HA! HA! MY PLAN IS SURE TO WORK!

HAMLY STAGGERS BACK OUT ONTO THE BATTLE-FIELD, AND COLLAPSES AS THE DRUG TAKES EFFECT. BUT WHILE HE IS POWERLESS TO MOVE, HE IS AWARE OF EVERYTHING OCCURRING ABOUT HIM...
HO! HO! LOOK AT MY BUDDIES! THE SAPS! THEY CAN HAVE IT, THE.....! JUST LIKE IN MY NIGHTMARE! BUT I'LL LIVE! YEAH! I'LL LIVE!



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BUT THE BEST-LAID PLANS OF MICE AND HUMAN RATS CAN GO ASTRAY...
GOOD WORK, GUYS! WE DIDN'T DO SO BAD FOR A BUNCH OF GREENIES, HUH?
THE BURIAL SQUAD GOES PROMPTLY TO WORK..
SO THE REDS GOT HAMLY, EH? TOO BAD! I NEVER DID LIKE THAT GUY. I ALWAYS THOUGHT HE'D GOOF-OFF WHEN THE CHIPS WERE DOWN, BUT YOU GOTTA ADMIT HE DIED FOR HIS COUNTRY LIKE A MAN!
HEY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THOSE GUYS? ARE THEY CRAZY?... THEY'RE D-DIGGING MY GRAVE!
N-N-NO!! DON'T TOSS ME INTO THAT GRAVE! I'M NOT REALLY DEAD! IT WAS A JOKE, YOU UNDERSTAND... JUST A JOKE!!!
BUT THE JOKE IS ON HAMLY. FOR THE EFFECTS OF THE DRUG BEGIN WEARING OFF... TOO LATE! SHOVELFULS OF DIRT RAIN DOWN ON THE EX-ACTOR, FILLING HIS EYES, MOUTH, NOSE, CHOKING OFF HIS BREATH. HE STRUGGLES TO MOVE... GAGS... IS HOPELESSLY WEIGHED DOWN...
TH- THEY'RE BURYING ME ALIVE! THIS IS WORSE THAN MY NIGHTMARE!!! AAA-AAAAAA...
THE MAN WHO TRIED TO OUTWIT DEATH IS DOOMED BY HIS OWN COWARDLY SCHEME. IRONICALLY, A BUGLE BLOWS "TAPS"... IN TRIBUTE TO... RONALD HAMLY, HERO!
THE END